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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 009516

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [ENRG](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [BM](#) [IN](#)

SUBJECT: NSA NARAYANAN FOCUSED ON POTUS VISIT, NSG, AND
BURMA ON EVE OF SARAN-BURNS TALKS

REF: A. NEW DELHI 9489

[B](#). LONDON 9725

Classified By: Charge Robert Blake for Reasons 1.4 (B, D)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Ahead of FS Saran's meeting with Burns on December 21, NSA Narayanan shared his priorities for the POTUS visit to India and his take on progress at the East Asia Summit and GOI policy on Burma in a December 16 meeting.

He listed progress on the civil nuclear agreement and initiatives to showcase democracy as the two most important deliverables for President Bush's expected visit to India. Narayanan shared India's approach to lobbying the NSG to relax nuclear restrictions, and gave his impressions on the first East Asian Summit in Kuala Lumpur and Prime Minister Singh's tough statement on Burma. End Summary.

POTUS Visit GOI Goals: Nuclear Agreement, Democracy
Initiatives

[1](#)2. (C) In a December 16 meeting, NSA MK Narayanan shared with the Ambassador and PolCouns GOI priorities on civil nuclear cooperation and democracy for the expected visit to India by President Bush. Narayanan listed progress on the civil nuclear agreement as the top priority, and hoped that the Administration would be able to introduce legislation to the US Congress before the trip (Ref A). Commenting that President Bush shares India's interest in spreading democratic values, he also expressed interest in initiatives to "showcase democracy" as a guiding force in Indian society.

He was eager for dates on the visit and indicated that the first week of March is a better time for the visit than the end of February, when political leaders will be busy passing the Indian budget. The GOI would like to give him a "great gala welcome" for him to meet a cross-section of Indians and get a sense of "the depth and warmth of the relationship." He also raised the ideas of an interfaith service and trips outside of Delhi. Quipping that President Bush is much more popular in India than elsewhere, he suggested the PM would ideally like a parade-style welcome with hundreds of thousands of Indians in attendance.

A Shared Lobbying Effort in the NSG

[1](#)3. (C) Further to the Ref A conversation on civil nuclear cooperation, Narayanan was optimistic about progress within the NSG, although anxious about attitudes of the Scandinavian countries. He commented that the GOI has been talking to Brazil and South Africa about relaxing restrictions and is hopeful that the US will be able to influence Japan and Canada. India is counting on the British and the French to work on the European countries. Narayanan expressed concern over traditional Scandinavian attitudes but took slight encouragement from Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg during his New Delhi visit on December 7-9. The Norwegians have advertised that they would not make any exceptions to the rules requiring countries to sign the NPT in order to join the NSG, but Stoltenberg told the GOI that "there is room for dialogue" on the issue. Narayanan noted that incoming EU troika members Austria and Finland are also a problem, but seemed confident that France and the UK would deliver their EU partners for an NSG agreement. ASEAN Nations "Comfortable" with India

[1](#)4. (C) Narayanan expressed satisfaction with India's reception at the first East Asian summit. Observing that there was much talk of competition between India and China, Narayanan commented that ASEAN nations seemed more comfortable with India's rise. There was also considerable interest in India's information technology expertise and contributions to maritime security as well as PM Singh's offer of an English teaching program for its poorest ASEAN neighbors. He reported that Singh's meetings with the Chinese were "cordial," and that the next meeting on the border dispute will take place in January in New Delhi.

PM Tells Burma to "Come Back into the Mainstream"

[1](#)5. (C) Following on Narayanan's conversation with U/S Burns in London about Burma, the NSA confirmed PM Singh's tough

statements in Kuala Lumpur on the need for progress in Burma. Narayanan relayed that the PM had basically told Burma that "you don't want to become a pariah state." Singh also told the Burmese PM Soe Win that he was not trying to run the country for him, but Burma is "out of step with the rest of the world," and stressed that the leadership needs to bring the country back into the mainstream and release Aung San Suu Kyi. Soe Win told PM Singh that he would carry the message to the Burmese leadership, but Narayanan noted that he had not made any further commitment on democracy or human rights.

Comment: Democracy Initiatives a Terrific POTUS Deliverable

16. (C) After the GOI's first public effort to showcase the benefits of its democratic system with the UN Democracy Initiative, it now looks willing to take this policy one big step further during the POTUS visit. While it is surprising that Narayanan would put democracy ahead of UNSC permanent membership, we should use this momentum to push for democracy initiatives in such tough spots as Iraq, Central Asia, and Afghanistan.

17. (U) (U) Visit New Delhi's Classified Website:
(<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/sa/newdelhi/>)
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